

RESPONSE

Claims 1-46 are pending in the application. Claims 1-21, 26-37 and 42-46 are rejected. Applicant has amended claims 1, 9, 11, 15, 20, 29, 31, 36, and 43. Applicant has added new claims 47-66. Reconsideration and re-examination of pending claims 1-66 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections based on 35 USC 112

Claims 9, 20, and 36 are rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With respect to claims 9, 20, and 36, the Examiner states that the symbol “^” is not defined and is not well known in the art. The Examiner has interpolated (sic) the “2^n” as “2 to the power of n”. Applicant has amended claims 9, 20, and 36 with “2^n” rewritten as “2ⁿ”.

Claim Rejections based on 35 USC 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 7-10, 15, 18-20, 26, 31, 34-36, and 42 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Zhu 6,323,860.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Zhu does not anticipate amended independent claims 1, 15, and 31 because Zhu does not teach the claim element of minimizing empty tiles. The dependent claims, being based on allowable base claims, are themselves allowable.

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Claim Rejections based on USC 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 2-6, 16, 17, 21, 32, 33, and 37 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhu in view of Larson 6,636,232. These dependent claims, being based on an allowable base claim, are allowable.

Claims 11-14, 27-30, and 43-46 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhu.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Zhu does not make the claimed invention of independent claims 15, 31, and 43 obvious because Zhu does not teach, describe, or suggest the claim element of minimizing of empty tiles.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 2-25 and 38-41 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has added new claims 47-66 as suggested and contends that these new claims are allowable.

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims 1-66 are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and in condition for allowance. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that pending claims 1-66 be allowed.

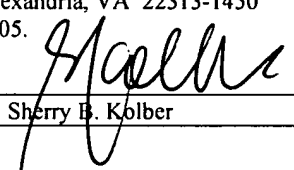
Respectfully submitted,
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